

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: DECONTROL 12/31/75

TAGS: ETRD, IZ, VS

SUBJECT: IRAQ AND SOUTH VIET-NAM SIGN ECONOMIC AGREEMENT

1. ON JUNE 30 MRS. NGUYEN THI BINH SOUTH VIETNAMESE (SVN) PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVT (PRG) FOREIGN MINISTER AND IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER SAADOUN HAMMADI SIGNED AN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT IN BAGHDAD. NO DETAILS OF AGREEMENT HAVE YET BEEN PUBLISHED.

2. MRS. BINH WAS IN BAGHDAD JUNE 23 TIL JULY 2 AND DURING THAT TIME MET WITH PRESIDENT AL-BAKR, RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSEIN AND NUMEROUS OTHER IRAQI OFFICIALS. SHE VISITED AN OIL REFINERY AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL SITES.

3. THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE ABOUNDED IN EXPRESSIONS OF MUTUAL ADMIRATION. MRS. BINH WELCOMED IMPROVEMENT IN IRAQI-IRANIAN RELATIONS. IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER CONGRATULATED SVN "FOR THE GREAT VICTORY OF THE PEOPLES OF VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA AGAINST US AGGRESSION AND INTERVENTION AND CONSIDERS IT AS AN OUTSTANDING EVENT IN THE MODERN HISTORY OF MANKIND AND A MARVELOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT." THE TWO SIDES REAFFIRMED

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THAT ALL ZIONIST SCHEMES, SUPPORTED BY US IMPERIALISTS,

WILL "SUSTAIN IGNOMINIOUS DEFEAT, AS WAS THE CASE IN INDOCHINA." BOTH SIDES LAUDED THE ROLE OF THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS IN CONFRONTING IMPERIALISM, CONDEMNED PRESENCE OF US TROOPS IN SOUTH KOREA AND DEMANDED REUNIFICATION OF KOREAN PENINSULA.

4. COMMENT: FACT THAT FOREIGN MINISTER SPENT EIGHT DAYS IN IRAQ LESS THEN TWO MONTHS AFTER HER REGIME'S SEIZED POWER MUST BE IN SEARCH OF SOME SUBSTANTIAL GOAL. GOI MEDIA HAVE RELEASED VIRTUALLY NO HARD INFORMATION ON THIS AGREEMENT, WHICH IS IN ITSELF MOST UNUSUAL. IT IS REASONABLE TO CONJECTURE THAT IRAQI CONTRIBUTION MUST BE EITHER MONEY, OIL OR BOTH WHILE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE MAY BE TRYING TO DEVELOP AN ASSURED MARKET FOR THEIR MOST OBVIOUS EXPORT COMMODITY; RICE. THERE IS NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT IRAQ WILL BE GENEROUS TO SOUTH VIET-NAM WHOSE PRG THE GOI LONG AG RECOGNIEZED AND WHOSE DIPLOMATS HAVE BEEN RESIDENT IN BAGHDAD SINCE 1971. AS US SUPPLIERS HAVE RECENTLY DISCOVERED, IRAQ HAS BECOME A VERY ATTRACTIVE MARKET FOR RICE AND IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT WE WILL SOON BE COMPETING WITH SVN FOR SALES IN IRAQ.

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